AN EPISTLE TO FRIENDS IN GREAT-BRITAIN, or elsewhere,

CONTAINING

Advice and Consolation, particularly address'd to those who are under Tribulation, in the following Stations of Life, *viz.*

1. To the Widows and Fatherless.
2. To the Orphans.
3. To Apprentices.
4. To Men and Maid Servants.
5. To Fathers and Mothers, with their Children.
6. To the Poor, Aged, and Infirm, *&c.*

By DAVID HALL.

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This Book belongs to the

TO FRIENDS OF KNARESBOROUGH Monthly-Meeting, *held at* ASQUITH *the 21ſt of the Twelfth Month* 1752, *and to the next enſuing* Quarterly-Meeting *at* YORK; *which is now extended to the* Quarterly *and* Monthly-Meetings *of* FRIENDS *in* GREAT-BRITAIN, *or elſewhere.*

Dearly beloved Friends!

NOtwithſtanding Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept, and many wholſome Advices, ſuitable to divers States in the Church, have been from Time to Time heretofore adminiſtred by ſeveral worthy Friends, which I truſt have been, and ſtill may be of Service, if duly applied; yet nevertheleſs in my Confinement at home, occaſion'd by ſome Indiſpoſition of Body, having had frequent Opportunities of ſolidly remembring my Friends abroad, and weightily conſidering the preſent State of the Church, I have of late Time found my Mind engag'd and

drawn (I humbly hope) by the Cords of Gospel Love, pursuant to the Direction in *Job*,
Job vi. 14. *To him that is afflicted, Pity should be shew'd from his Friend*; to seek out all the honest-hearted and faithful poor Friends; and even those of the lowest Estate in our *Israel*, and cordially to pay them the following Epistolary Visit, in all their various Exercises and Probations, wherever their Lots are cast, which I now here offer to your Perusal, and serious Consideration; and inasmuch as (if I mistake not) the following Lines proceed from that universal Love which is not confined within the Bounds of one Monthly-Meeting or County, I could desire they might be suffered to circulate further: Howbeit, with that due Submission, in which it always becomes and behoves any one Member of the Body to appear, whenever he or she may make any Propositions to the Society, I refer the Matter to my dear Friends Judgment and Determination, who am, in the Love of Truth,

Your kindly affectionate Friend and Brother,

DAVID HALL.

TO the Poor, and those even of the lowest Degree and Rank in Israel, *as touching the Things of this Life, wheresoever they are scatter'd, who, professing the blessed Principle of Truth, are honestly endeavouring by the Assistance thereof, so to order their whole Conversation, as that they may have a Conscience always void of Offence, toward God and toward Men, according to their several Growths and Capacities, though attended with many Exercises, Straits and pinching Circumstances on divers Accounts, a nearly sympathizing Brother of theirs in Tribulation, who often remembers them in the Bowels of Gospel Love and Charity, wisheth Consolation, and tenderly sendeth* Greeting.

My dear Friends, Brethren and Sisters in Tribulation!

IT is most certain that the Love of God, through Christ his Son, our Saviour, is in a merciful Day of Visitation extended to all Men, of all Nations and Stations, high and low, rich and poor, in order for their Redemption, Reconciliation and Salvation; yet in a peculiar Manner, I am humbly and thankfully sensible, that even the very good Will of him that dwelt in the Bush, when just about to send seasonable Relief to his afflicted People, sighing and groaning in the Land of *Egypt*, runs with a flowing Stream abundantly to his upright-hearted, faithful poor Servants, that are going through many Tribulations,

often drinking various bitter Cups, and frequently meeting with disagreeable Things, to the End that their bitter Cups might be sweeten'd and sanctify'd, by his heavenly Life-giving Presence, as sure as ever the bitter Waters of *Marah* were by him, through the Mediation of *Moses*, made sweet and refreshing to his poor People in their Travels thro' the Wilderness, towards the Land flowing with Milk and Honey; that the Poor in *Israel* might experimentally understand the Truth of the Apostle's Assertion,—*All Things work together for good to them that love God.*

Rom. viii. 28.

Dear Hearts! It springs up in my Mind to say unto you, O be not dismayed, nor discouraged, for although you may at Times be ready to lament yourselves, under Apprehensions that you are sunk and press'd down very low; yet, be assured, the eternal God is your Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting Arms: In all your proving Junctures, labour to stand still, and see the Salvation of the Lord, and I doubt not but you will witness that blessed Hope (so often spoken of by the Apostle) to be unto you as an Anchor of your poor tossed Souls, both sure and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the Vail. Let us ever remember, that the merciful Regard of the Almighty was, in all Ages and Dispensations, signally manifested to his poor suffering People in all their Difficulties. —*When they were but a few Men in Number*, saith the Text, *yea very few, and Strangers in the Land: When they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdom to another People, he suffered no Man to do them wrong: Yea, he reproved Kings for their Sakes, saying, Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm.*—*For he that toucheth you, toucheth the Apple of his Eye.*—*He found him*, saith *Moses* in his Song, *in a desart Land, and in the waste howling Wilderness: He led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as*

Psal. cv. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Zech ii. 8.

Deut. xxxii. 10.

the

the Apple of his Eye.—In all their Afflictions he was Isa. lxiii. 9.
afflicted, saith *Isaiah*, *and the Angel of his Presence saved them; in his Love and in his Pity he redeemed them, and he bare them, and carried them all the Days of old.*

In the foregoing Places we may plainly perceive, how engaging and well-pleasing to the Lord, the Faithfulness of his People is, and ever was; for he said, *Surely they are my People, Children that will* Isa. lxiii. 8. *not lie: So he was their Saviour.*

Moreover, *my Beloved*, may all the Faithful and Poor in *Israel* be encouraged by the Privileges, Virtues and Promises of the Gospel:—*Strengthen ye* Isa. xxxv. *the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees. Say* 3, 4. *to them that are of a fearful Heart, Be strong, fear not, behold your God will come with Vengeance, even God with a Recompence, he will come and save you*, saith that same evangelical Prophet. Again,—*And* Isa. xxix. *in that Day shall the Deaf hear the Words of the* 18, 19. *Book, and the Eyes of the Blind shall see out of Obscurity, and out of Darkness. The Meek also shall encrease their Joy in the Lord, and the Poor among Men shall rejoice in the holy one of* Israel.

What good Cause therefore have all the Faithful and Upright in Heart, in how low Situation soever in this World, to be encouraged and trust in the Lord? For as one of his tried Servants testify'd, *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them* Psal. xxxiv. *that fear him, and delivereth them.* 7.

How amiable therefore, how excellent must the very Tents and Situations of the Upright in Heart be, (though never so poor as to this fading World) who have the highly valuable Pearls and Riches of Faith, Hope and Charity within, and such a powerful, glorious and heavenly Protector to guard and defend them in their solitary Habitations. May not we then justly account those the truly noble and right honourable Princes and Princesses in

Israel, comforted and made glad by the lifting up of the Light of the Countenance of the Lord, while he refifteth and beholdeth the Proud afar off, though they be the Grandees of this World, dwelling as in ſpacious Palaces, faring ſumptuouſly every Day, and ſtretching themſelves on their ſoft and delicate Couches and Beds of Down. My Heare is open to you in the Love of Truth, being encouraged and comforted in this my Viſit and Salutation unto you, humbly remembring the Words of the royal Pſalmiſt, —*Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the Poor, the Lord will deliver him in Time of Trouble.*

Pſal. xli. 1.

But, *O my Beloved*, that I may pay you this Viſit of Love as throughly as I am capable, that, as I may ſay, I may ſee all your ſolitary Cottages, Tents and Families, and greet you one by one, from Houſe to Houſe, I am engag'd and drawn by the Cords of Love to deſcend to the following Particulars, *viz.*

1*ſt.* To the Widows and Fatherleſs,

2*d.* To Orphans.

3*d.* To thoſe in the Station of Apprentices.

4*th.* To Man-ſervants and Maid-ſervants; as alſo to the poor young People among Friends in general, in what Station ſoever they be, whether married or unmarried, Boarders in Friends Families, Journeymen, or ſuch as are juſt opening Shops, and beginning Buſineſs for themſelves in their ſtrait and narrow Circumſtances.

5*th.* To Fathers and Mothers, with their Children in their Families.

6*th.* To the Aged, and Infirm, whether reliev'd by the Church, or otherwiſe.

1*ſt.* O ye dear Widows, who are Widows indeed, I mean faithful according to Knowledge, (for to ſuch I am now writing) although in ſome Reſpects your

your States may look disconsolate and discouraging, being as lonesome Doves without your Mates, yet the special Regard of the Fountain of Mercies is such towards you, that even to pay you and your poor Fatherless Children a Visit in your Afflictions, is affirm'd by the holy Apostle, to be a Part of the *pure Religion* and undefiled before God and the Father; and the Lord God himself in his tender Mercy and Pity, many Hundred Years before the Apostle declared those his Sentiments, hath often express'd his tender Care and compassionate Regard to Persons in your Situation, as particularly in *Jeremiah*,—*Leave thy Fatherless Children*, saith he, *I will preserve them alive, and let thy Widows trust in me.* Also when the Lord is treating with the degenerate *Jews*, he mercifully condescends to propose what was to be done, and what Steps were to be taken by them, in order that they might be reconciled unto him, three of which were these following, *Relieve the Oppressed*; *judge the Fatherless*; *plead for the Widow.*

James i. 27.

Jer. xlix. 11.

Isa. i. 17.

Notwithstanding, ye pious Widows, my honoured Friends, ye are deprived of your dear Husbands, do not despond; but receive ye Consolation in this, that God in his holy Habitation is your Judge. And although, O ye dear Fatherless Children, who are of orderly Conduct, and are desirous to grow in Grace, and the saving Knowledge of God, tho' ye be left destitute of natural Fathers, God is, and will be much more than a natural Father unto each of you, so long as ye shall continue and persevere in the Ways of Virtue;—*A Father of the Fatherless*, saith the kingly Prophet, *a Judge of the Widows, is God in his holy Habitation*; who also gave a strict Charge concerning Persons in your Condition, on this wise,—*Ye shall not afflict any Widow or Fatherless Child*, saith the Lord. Likewise the Psalmist testifies,

Psal. lxviii. 5.

Exod. xxii. 22.

The

Pſal. cxlvi. 9. *The Lord preſerveth the Strangers; he relieveth the Fatherleſs and Widow.*

May it be remember'd for your Encouragement, O ye poor Widows, how our unchangeable God, in his tender Mercy had Compaſſion upon two of your deeply tried Siſters in former Days, when under very diſconſolate Circumſtances. And O ye dear Fatherleſs Children, how three of your Brothers were at the ſame Time mercifully and miraculouſly reliev'd: The Husband of the firſt Widow dying, left her in ſtreit and afflicting Circumſtances, ſo that the Creditor was ready to lay Hands on her two Sons, and take them for Bondmen; but upon an humble and honeſt Application to the Lord's Servant *Eliſha*, the Lord bleſs'd her little Oil, and alleviated her diſtreſſed Caſe. The ſecond I ſpeak of, was the Widow of *Zarephath*, to whom the Prophet *Elijah* was ſent for Suſtenance in a Time of great Scarcity; which poor Widow had only an Handful of Meal in a Barrel, and a little Oil in a Cruſe, for the Support of herſelf, and her poor Fatherleſs Child; yet being under the tender Notice of the Judge of the Widow, and the Father of the Fatherleſs, they both, and their ſmall Proviſion, were mightily bleſs'd, and had a Sufficiency granted them, both for the Prophet's Sake in the firſt Place, and their own ſeaſonable Relief: Truſt therefore in the Lord, caſt your Care upon him, for he careth for you, as he ever hath done heretofore for the faithful Widows, and innocent Fatherleſs.

2 Kings iv. 1.

1 Kings xvii. 12.

Notwithſtanding we don't expect ſuch Miracles to be wrought upon our Oil and Meal in the ſame Degree, yet the Bleſſing of God maketh poor Widows and Fatherleſs rich, and gives them, in their low Eſtate, really to experience the Truth of that worthy Aſſertion of the Apoſtle, *Godlineſs with Contentment is great Gain.* The Lord bleſs you,

1 Tim. vi. 6.

and

and ſanctify you unto himſelf, and your Circumſtances unto you.—*She*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *that is a Widow indeed, and deſolate, truſteth in God, and continueth in Supplications and Prayers Night and Day.* 1 Tim. v. 5.

I hope, dear Siſters, you, under the like pious, depending Concern, and devout Exerciſe, are journeying along. And before take heed that none of you let in Reaſonings, that you have never been capable of being ſo ſerviceable as many others have been in thoſe Particulars mention'd by the Apoſtle, that is to ſay, in lodging Strangers, in waſhing the Saints Feet, in relieving the Afflicted, *&c.* For if you have been, are, and ſhall be honeſtly concern'd to do your beſt, your Mites have been, are, and will be accepted, as certainly as ever your Siſters of old were not only accepted, but even commended and preferred before the large Gifts, which the rich Perſons out of their Abundance had caſt into the Treaſury; ſo pray be not uneaſy on ſuch Accounts; if ye have done what you could, it is enough, let not your Heart be troubled.—*For*, as ſaith the Apoſtle, *if there be firſt a willing Mind, it is accepted, according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* 2 Cor. viii. 12.

And, O ye dear Fatherleſs Children, whenever it may ſo fall out that the Circumſtances of your poor Mothers, by reaſon of Sickneſs, old Age, or any other Accident, may require your Succour and Aſſiſtance, as you are and ſhall be ready and willing, after the beſt Manner you are capable, affectionately to help and attend them in their neceſſitous Conditions, you'll undoubtedly have much Peace of Mind in thus expreſſing the Marks of your Gratitude and Affection, and a bleſſed Reward will from the Lord certainly be given unto you; which good Offices, both natural Affection and the Truth, always incline virtuous Children, without grudging, to perform as their incumbent and reaſonable Duty,

and

and honourable Retaliation to their tender Mothers, who took ſo much Care of them when they were not capable to take Care of themſelves.

Mark, all ſincere and faithful poor Widowers are, in all their Straits, with their hopeful Children, included in this compaſſionate Salutation. *Farewel*, I muſt at preſent leave you, and proceed to the next Particular, where I ſhall find,

2dly. You dear Orphans, that are now left without Fathers and Mothers in a dangerous and troubleſome World, my Bowels yearn over you, and in the Arms of Love I embrace you, begging you may not be too much caſt down; only live in the Fear of God, and do your beſt according to Knowledge to obey his Requirings, and he will certainly take Care of you; — *When my Father and Mother*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *forſake me, then the Lord will take me up.* The Stay or Continuance of the moſt near and dear Relations here is altogether uncertain: We ſee how ſoon Huſbands are, by Death, ſeparated from their Wives, and Wives from Huſbands, Parents from Children, and Children from Parents; but I have often thought, and ſometimes told Children, of that everlaſting Father, which the evangelical Prophet in a moſt moving Manner ſpeaks of, That when Widows, Fatherleſs, Orphans, &c. are left in this Vale of Tears, ſomething like mournful Pelicans in the deſolate Wilderneſs, and as complaining Sparrows on the Houſe-top, they might in Faith look up unto this everlaſting Father, and be comforted, relieved and preſerved. The evangelical Prophet thus expreſſeth his glorious and heart-affecting Prediction, — *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the Government ſhall be upon his Shoulder; and his Name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace: Of the Encreaſe of his Government and Peace*

Pſal. xxvii. 10.

Iſa. ix. 6, 7.

there

there shall be no End. O dear Creatures, if he be your Counsellor, and if you (and all now saluted in this Epistle) stand in and obey his Counsel, you shall certainly know him to be unto you the mighty God to preserve, protect, deliver and save you; and also the Prince of Peace, to set up and establish his peaceable Kingdom in your Hearts; and there to sway his righteous Sceptre; and also to be unto you a never-failing and everlasting Father, to nourish and provide for you according to his Wisdom, and to supply your Wants by his Blessing upon your honest Endeavours.

Therefore, dear Children, be of good Courage, if your natural Fathers and Mothers have left you, your best, most certain, most powerful and everlasting Father ever remains, and cannot be removed into a Corner. *Farewel*, I recommend you to him, and leave you under his Care, and proceed to the next Particular, even to,

3dly. You honest and well-minded, trusty Apprentices, whom I salute in much Love, and for your Encouragement tell you, that many being faithful to the Lord, and to their own Masters (according to the best of their Understandings) though but very poor as to this World, and even of mean Capacities too, in comparison, as to natural or acquired Parts, have made notable Improvements in their own natural Parts, and in the Arts and Mysteries that they were bound Apprentices to learn, have been wonderfully bless'd by divine Providence, have laid a Foundation in their Apprenticeships for their becoming in due Time honourable Tradesmen upon their own Bottom, yea, many have risen (through God's Blessing on their honest Endeavours) from poor laborious Apprentices to prosperous, rich, and honourable Masters, and often even have been anointed for the Ministration of the glorious

Gospel,

Gospel, and divers good Services in the Church of Christ; while some rich Mens Sons have turn'd Prodigals, spent their Substance in bad Company, and have landed among insolvent Debtors in Prison-houses. Therefore, dear Children, continue faithful, have your Dependency upon *Jacob*'s God, and he can raise you from the very lowest State, even from the Dunghill to sit among Princes. Please to remember *Jacob*'s having enter'd into Covenant with the Lord, the Articles whereof were on this wise, *That if the Lord would give him Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, would preserve and bring him safe to his Father's House at last, he should be his God*; after twenty Years faithful and hard Service in his Uncle *Laban*'s House and Field, he became a religious, prudent and exemplary Master of a large Family, and was made even two Bands: He was as a Blessing to his Uncle, Flock and Family; so often do faithful and conscientious Apprentices prove to their Masters Families. Those that are bound as Apprentices, and proceed honestly in all their Conduct, they are like as if they were casting good Seed into the Ground, which afterwards will produce a plentiful Haryest; such grow in Favour with God and good Friends, who will always be ready with Pleasure to assist them, as Occasion may require; for all those Friends in whose Hearts the Truth and Gospel Spirit prevail and preside, have always a tender Regard to all such as this Epistle is directed to, whom these poor Creatures may freely consult and advise with in any difficult Emergency: Whilst they who are only Eye-servants, and in their Masters Absence loiter, purloin and are unfaithful, lay a Foundation for **Shame, Poverty**, and sometimes for the **House of Correction** too. The Lord bless you, and preserve you; I must proceed to the next Particular.

Gen. xxviii. 20, 21.

4thly. My well-esteemed Friends, who are of orderly Conversation, and religiously inclin'd in the Stations of Men-servants and Maid-servants, be of good Courage in the honest Discharge of your Duties to your Masters, Mistresses, and their Children, looking up unto, and begging a Blessing of your good and great Lord and Master, which is in Heaven, so you'll be preserv'd by him from the many Snares of your grand Enemy and his Agents, which are cunningly and subtilly laid for the feet of our dear young People in their several Posts and Capacities. As you persevere in the Ways of Virtue, you may become (with the trusty and hopeful Apprentices) a Blessing and Advantage to your Masters Families, being good Examples to their Children: Thus proceeding, though you have but little in this World, the God of *Jacob* will bless your Basket and your Store, and add unto you many Blessings, even beyond your Expectation; for you being Servants, will, by the Truth, be made the Lord's free Men and free Women, and if the Truth make you free, then are you free indeed. Such young Persons as these, are with the faithful Widows abovesaid, worthy of double Honour: These have a blessed Portion in the Truth: These have a goodly Heritage, and are, by the Lord and his People, esteemed far above those that are rich as to Things of this Life, but are high and irreligious. As you continue thus in the Way of Well-doing, ye may become very serviceable to the Church of Christ in your Generation, it may be both in the Discipline, and some of you in the Publication of the Gospel; being made experimental Witnesses (in your Measures and Degrees) of that glorious and evangelical Promise and Prediction, — *And it shall come to pass afterwards, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesy, your old Men* Joel ii. 28, 29.

shall dream Dreams, your young Men shall see Visions: And also upon the Servants, and upon the Handmaids, in those Days will I pour out my Spirit. O every one of you wait diligently to know this gracious Promise fulfill'd in you. And although some of you may (with some of the poor Apprentices) think your Places hard, and attended with divers Difficulties on some Accounts, yet fear the Lord, and depend upon him, and he will give you Patience, succour and support you; yea, he will alleviate all your Grievances, and sweeten your Bitters by his comfortable Presence, and the lifting up of his glorious Countenance upon you.

O *dear Hearts*, consider ye also the exercising Case of your Brother *Jacob* in former Times, who, though he had his Wages changed ten Times, and thus complain'd, — *In the Day the Drought consumed me, and the Frost by Night, and my Sleep departed from mine Eyes.* In all which twenty Years hard Service, the God of his Father, the God of *Abraham*, and the Fear of *Isaac*, conducted and protected him safe through all to the End of his Servitude, and the End of his Life; and wheresoever Apprentices and Servants have their Lots cast in the Families of such religious Masters and Mistresses as don't only permit, but encourage and put forward their Servants in going to religious Meetings, both on First-days and other Days of the Week, let it be accounted as a great Privilege, and a singular Favour, which all ought carefully and thankfully to make proper Use of, who are favour'd therewith; and I hope and wish that all our well-minded young Men and Women, that are desirous to be Servants, may use proper Endeavours to get such Places in Friends Families, where the abovesaid valuable Privileges and Liberties may be allowed them, and enjoyed.

And,

And, ye dear young People, who are Journeymen, or Boarders in Friends Families, diligently working for your Bread in your respective Employments, and also ye that are setting up for yourselves, and have not much of this World to begin with, being piously and religiously incln'd; for such I am seeking out; please to observe the Apostle's Advice to the *Roman* Church, (that they should be) *not slothful in Business* (but) *fervent in Spirit; serving the Lord. Rejoicing in Hope; patient in Tribulation; continuing instant in Prayer.* Rom. xii. 11, 12. As you are diligently labouring with your Hands, breathe with your Hearts and Minds to the Lord for his Blessing upon your Endeavours, and be not too anxious about Temporals: Serve the Lord faithfully, and above all Things in this World mind your Growth and Establishment in the Truth, and fear not that you shall ever want those three necessary Articles, MEAT, DRINK, and APPAREL; ever remembring the Exhortation and Promise of Christ, most worthy of Commemoration, most worthy to be written in Letters of Gold, and ever to be reduced to constant Practice, *Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness, and all these Things shall be added unto you.* Mat. vi. 33. The Truth ever teaches all Tradesmen, who mind its Dictates, to keep within the Bounds of their own Stocks and Capacities. Be sure follow this your sure Guide, and you'll do well. Under the Care and Keeping of *Jacob's* God, I must now leave you for a while, and step along to the next particular, where I hope and expect to find Industry, Frugality, Justice, true Religion, and the Blessing of Heaven.

Eighthly. My well-beloved and much esteemed Friends, just as I was approaching you, that ancient Salutation (prescribed and commanded by

our blessed Lord to his seventy Disciples, just setting out on their Gospel Visit to Families, Towns
Luke x. 5. and Cities) sprung in my Mind—*And into whatsoever House ye enter, first say, Peace be to this House*: And inasmuch as I believe the Prince of Peace is here among you honest, laborious, frugal, religious Fathers, Mothers and Children, all (that are capable thereof) co-working and employ'd together in your lawful and necessary Vocations, in Love and Harmony, in order to earn your Bread, and that your little Oil, through the Blessing of God, may be made sufficient to answer all just Demands made upon you, having at the same Time your Eye fix'd on the Lord above all Things, and depending upon him, being all along conscientiously and fervently concern'd to perform your several Duties unto God, who is the Author of your Being, and your Mercies, not daring to omit the attending religious Meetings, both on First-days and other Days of the Week, so far as your Circumstances and Situation (with respect to Distance from the Meeting-place, &c.) will reasonably allow; for Truth requires nothing unreasonable at our Hands: May the Peace of God rest upon you, and may all your Labours be water'd with his Blessing.

Suffer me, *dear Friends*, to lay before your serious Consideration, how that when Christ our Lord was going about in the Body of Flesh, doing Good, and calling Men to be his Disciples, Messengers and Promulgators of the Gospel, he went not to the Courts of Kings, Colleges or Academies of the Learned, but walking by the Sea of *Galilee*, he saw divers young Men aboard with their Fathers in Vessels, industriously concern'd and engag'd in their fishing Business, (as you are in your respective Vocations) some were casting a Net into the Sea, and others mending their Nets; to which young Per-
Mark i. 17. sons Jesus said, *Come ye after me, and I will make*

you

you to become Fishers of Men. And straitway they forsook their Nets, and followed him. Stand open, I beseech you therefore, and wait for the Call, and give up yourselves, and faithfully obey and follow him that calleth. O consider their ready Obedience in straitway leaving both Fathers, Ships and Nets; and of how eminent and remarkable Service those poor Fishers became! *Not many wise Men after the Flesh*, saith the Apostle, *not many Mighty, not many Noble are called. But God hath chosen the foolish Things of the World to confound the Wise, and God hath chosen the weak Things of the World to confound the Things which are mighty; and base Things of the World, and Things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and Things which are not, to bring to nought Things that are; that no Flesh should glory in his Presence.* We see the faithful Ministers and Elders are reduced to a few in Number in some Places; yea, divers Meetings have no publick Ministers belonging to them: The present State of the Church therefore seems to call for these Kind of useful Instruments; the Lord, we must own, is not awanting, but in this Case we may say, *Though many are called, few are chosen*, by reason of their Disobedience and Unwillingness to give up to the heavenly Call and Vision. Too many of the young People of this Generation, under the Profession of Truth, (especially of those) that are rich and full, living in the Affluence of the Enjoyments of this Life, seem too much to soar above the gracious Calls and Invitations of humble Jesus, sometimes called the *Carpenter's Son*: I beg and hope therefore, that you, with the laborious young Fishermen above-mention'd, may straitway leave all Incumbrances, when you are sensible of the gracious and heavenly Call of the good and great Shepherd of the Sheep, whensoever he shall call you to Service among his Lambs and Sheep. In the mean while, *dear Children*,

1 Cor. 1. 26, 27, 28, 29.

as ye keep under the Conduct of the holy Spirit of Truth, the Comforter and Remembrancer, you will not forget, but often thankfully and humbly remember, acknowledge, and put a right Value upon the Favours of kind Providence which you enjoy; especially that you have yet good Parents alive to apply unto, and to receive wholsome Counsel and Assistance from, and that ye are not yet reduc'd to the Number of the poor Fatherless Children or Orphans; yet let your Rejoicings in the Enjoyments of these peculiar Blessings be always attended with Fear and Reverence, not knowing how soon they may be taken from you, or you from them.

But before I leave you, I must here insert a few Words in much *Christian* Sympathy and Commiseration (consistent with that apostolick Advice,—

Rom. xii. 15. *Weep with them that Weep*) to every such faithful Father or Mother, whether properly appertaining to any of the particular Classes, specified and greeted in this Epistle of Condolence, or placed in other Stations of the World, with regard to Enjoyments of this Life, as may be deeply tried with that very afflicting, heart-breaking, heavy Exercise, and extremely bitter Cup, of having a Son or Daughter who takes bad Courses, somewhat like *Esau*, who by hunting, roving about, and marrying out of the Counsel of God, and contrary to the Mind of his good Parents, almost ruin'd himself, and brought much Grief on them; under a Sense whereof, his tender Mother sorrowing for the Miscarriage of her elder Son, and solicitous for the Preservation of her Younger, thus complains in her moving and mournful Strains, on this wise,

Gen. xxvii. 46. —*I am weary of my Life, because of the Daughters of Heth; if* Jacob *take a Wife of the Daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the Daughters of the Land, what good shall my Life do me?* Or in some Respects like poor unhappy *Dinah*, the Daughter of

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her worthy Father *Jacob*; who letting out her Mind abroad, took a Tour into the Land to ſee the Daughters thereof; and while ſhe was caſting her wandering Eyes upon the Daughters of the Land, a Son of that Land caſt his Eyes upon her, enſnar'd and defiled her, to her own very great Loſs and Shame, and to the inexpreſſible Grief of her honourable Father and Brethren: To every ſuch diſtreſs'd Parent, I have, in much Compaſſion, to ſay, *Be not too much caſt down, thou art under the tender Regard and merciful Notice of the Lord*: As I hope thou canſt honeſtly make thy Appeal unto God, who knows the Hearts of all Men, that thou haſt, both by Example and Precept, done thy very beſt for the Preſervation of thy Child or Children; and as from Time to Time, in much Humility and Sincerity thou ſpreadeſt thy Cauſe, and layeſt thy ſorrowful Caſe before him, pouring out thy humble Petitions, Prayers and Supplications at the Throne of Grace, for his gracious Relief, he will undoubtedly take Notice and Pity of theſe thy diſtreſſing Circumſtances and ſorrowful Tears; he will in due Time mitigate this and all other thy Anxieties, and help thee more and yet more to caſt thy Care upon him, who careth for thee, and not ſuffer thee to ſink too low under thy Troubles and perplexing Cares; yea, I am ready to hope that ſome, if not many, will yet live to ſee that joyful and much deſired Day, in which they may have the Happineſs (and after a long Time of mourning) to meet, embrace and kiſs their long exil'd penitent, returning prodigal Sons or Daughters, and with Tears of Joy ſee them mercifully re-inſtated and re-admitted into the Father's Houſe.

Moreover, as I am now on my way, enquiring for all the poor Friends in Diſtreſs, in order that a Word of Comfort and Advice might be tenderly dropt to each of them in this Viſit of Love, I find I

must not pass by without speaking to some particular Cases, where such a Couple or Couples may dwell, whether rich or poor, who having been Professors in the Church of *England*, or some other Communion (not of us) married therein, but some Time after Marriage, the Husbands or Wives being convinc'd of the blessed Truth, receive the same in the Love thereof, and resolve, through divine Assistance, to give up in faithful Obedience thereto; yet by reason of the different Opinions and Ways of thinking those Wives and Husbands are of, touching divine Worship, and several Particulars, as the using of sundry Ceremonies, Traditions and Formalities, and also touching that weighty Point, the Education and Management of their Children (who have them) there are often Difficulties and proving Exercises on divers Accounts, to be met with by such convinc'd Husbands or Wives, who are truly desirous faithfully to discharge their several Duties to God Almighty, to their (yet unconvinc'd) Wives or Husbands and their Children, *&c.* to each of these I find it to spring in my Mind, cordially to say, *dear Brother*, or *Sister*, as thou knoweſt thy marriage Covenant and nuptial Ties are not dissolv'd, or cancel'd by thy Convincement, but art sensible that the precious Truth, thou art in thy Judgment convinc'd of, will ever teach and excite thee to demean thyself well, affectionately and prudently, in such manner as becomes the Truth, to thy Wife or Husband, tho' thou dareſt not join with her or him, in the set Forms, Ceremonies and superficial Performances, *&c.* which the Truth hath given thee plainly to see not consistent with the Spirituality of the new Covenant or Gospel Dispensation in which we now live. For the Spirit of Truth leads its Followers into all Truth, in all their Stations and Relations, whether Husbands or Wives, Parents or Children, Masters or Servants, and helps all to perform their

several Duties reciprocally one to another, so that, as thou keeps under the Conduct thereof, thou will be enabled to give undeniable Proofs to thy (yet unconvinc'd) Consort and others, that thy Change of Opinion or religious Principles hath not proceeded from a vain and whimsical Imagination, but from a real, conscientious, sincere Heart-work, Concern, Conviction and Illumination, which will also be farther confirm'd, if by thy prudent, circumspect and *Christian* Behaviour, thou shalt demonstrate to all impartial Beholders, that thou art not a worse, but a better Husband, Wife or Parent, than thou was before the said Change. And be sure, my *dear Friend*, whenever thou argues or disputes either with thy Consort, or any other Person, about Matters of FAITH, be very careful and watchful that thou all along keep to, and retain that most excellent Gift CHARITY; for it hath been often observ'd with Sorrow, that some, if not many, have in a fiery Zeal contended for FAITH, until they have lost CHARITY. As thou comest up in this *Christian* Deportment, who knows what good Effect and Influence thy prudent Conduct may in Time have on thy dissenting Consort in the conjugal Tye; for, as saith the Apostle on the like Occasion,—*For what knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? Or how knowest thou, O Man, whether thou shalt save thy Wife?* 1 Cor. vii. 16. However, the wise and cautious Behaviour of such a conscientious convinc'd Husband or Wife, may prove very winning and gaining upon his or her opposite Companion. Besides, it often happens that the poor Children of such Parents labour under their respective Difficulties, being many Times hard put to it, how to please both Father and Mother in their Addresses, Deportment and Proceedings in divers Respects.

In much Brotherly-kindness therefore, I cordially say unto you convinc'd Fathers and Mothers, and

your Children, who may incline to go along with you to religious Meetings: As your present Case, and the Difficulties you lie under, seem loudly to call for Wisdom and Prudence, Patience and Discretion, I earnestly entreat you to beg, and humbly wait for that Wisdom, which is first *pure, then peaceable, gentle, &c.* and for your Encouragement, James i. 5. the Apostle *James* speaks on this Wise, — *If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him*; and I hope you'll be safely and honourably conducted in the several Steps you have to tread, whereby you'll be preserv'd from being overcome of Evil, and helped to overcome Evil with Good; and experimentally learn the Truth of this Expression, — *Wisdom is better than Strength*: And know that (seemingly) great Oppositions are often got through by patient Suffering; the Fierceness of the Lion is often conquer'd by the Meekness of the Lamb; and as our good Friend *William Penn* said in his Advice to his Children, "Silence to Railing, "Prejudice and Mockery, is the best Answer, and "often conquers what Resistance inflames." I can but deeply condole with you who are vexed with these perplexing Circumstances, and I must in an especial Manner commiserate the Lot of those poor Children, who remembring the Commandment, — Exod. xx. 12. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy Days may be long in the Land*; and being very willing and desirous to keep and perform the same, but the Fathers and Mothers differing so far in their Sentiments on the Score of Religion, it is (next to) impracticable or impossible, that their Children should always please them both, in Dress or Address, Language, Deportment, or the Performance of their religious Duties and Devotion; whilst the Father thinks and draws one Way, the Mother is of another Mind, thinks and draws another Way; the

the Father propoles one Thing, the Mother diſſents therefrom, and propoſes quite the Reverſe; the poor affectionate Children lie under a pinching Dilemma, ſcarce knowing what to do, or what to ſay, or how to demean themſelves, ſo as rightly to anſwer the Commandment aboveſaid: for whilſt they pleaſe their Father, they diſpleaſe their Mother in divers Things, and by pleaſing their Mother, they generally diſoblige their Father.

A certain worthy publick Friend's Son, who unwarily let out his Mind to a young Woman of another Society, gain'd her Affections, and married her (I ſuppoſe) by a Prieſt; he had one Daughter by her, which poor Girl, as ſhe grew up to Years conveſtible, fell under the aforeſaid Difficulties, as I heard her Father with Sorrow relate; for when his Friends came to their Houſe, the Child apprehended herſelf under Obligation to behave in Salutations and Conduct agreeable to her Father's Mind, though at the ſame Time quite contrary to her Mother's liking; and again, a while after, when a Viſit is paid them by her Mother's Friends, the poor Child muſt wheel about, put on other Airs, appear after another Mode, in Conformity to her Mother's Fancy, tho' to the Grief and Trouble of her Father.

Alas! the Confuſion of mixt Marriages. In caſe all our young and unmarried Friends would ſeriouſly and timely ponder and conſider the aforeſaid Particulars, with all the Inconveniencies and afflicting Circumſtances that generally attend ſuch unhappy Matches as theſe, wherein the Huſband and Wife being of differing Sentiments in Matters of Religion (which are of far greater Moment than Temporals) are linked together as uneaſy Yokefellows in the inviolable Covenant of Matrimony for Term of Life; we would hope they might be henceforward diſcourag'd and deterr'd from ſuch imprudent and unadviſed Contracts, as have very often

often been an inexpressible Grief of Mind to Parents, prov'd perplexing Cases to the Parties concern'd, and have usher'd Confusion and Trouble into Families and the Society, (as above) and have been followed with such dismal Circumstances, as confirm many in their full Belief, that the Hand of divine Providence is against such mixt Matches. *Happy is he whom other Mens Harms do make to beware.*

Furthermore, I earnestly desire that the Fathers and Mothers, and Governors of Families, according to the worthy Recommendation and Advice given from a late Yearly-meeting at *London*, may now and then sit down together in their respective Families, to wait upon the Lord with their Children, Servants, and Boarders (who have them) to feel his good Presence; that the Elders may know their Hearts open'd to drop a Word of Counsel to the Younger, as the Truth may make Way, and the Hearts of those that are Younger may be open'd to receive the same; so that the Lord may be comfortably remembred, and acceptably worshipped in our Families; and Parents, Children, Servants, and all the Houshold, may be mercifully reach'd unto, and mutually edify'd one with another, to the further Establishment of the Elders in, and the drawing of the Youth to a Sense and Knowledge of the blessed Truth, and preserving them from the Corruptions of bad Examples and unsuitable Company; in which Opportunities the Elders or Parents may probably have to give their Children, Servants, &c. at Times, some encouraging and instructive Relations of the Lord's gracious Dealings with them, according to that divine Direction given to *Israel* of old, *viz. And these Words which I command thee this Day, shall be in thine Heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thy House, and when thou walkest*

Deut. vi. 6, 7.

walkest by the Way, and when thou liest down, and when thou riseſt up.

And as Servants are tenderly exhorted to Fidelity and Circumſpection in their Places, it is much deſired that all Maſters and Miſtreſſes might ſo abide under the Guidance of the bleſſed Principle of Truth, as that they might always ſo behave themſelves to their Servants with ſuch prudent Gentleneſs, Juſtice and *Chriſtian* Moderation on all Accounts, as becomes our holy Profeſſion, conſiſtent with the Apoſtle's Advice,—*Maſters, give unto your* Col. iv. 1. *Servants that which is juſt and equal, knowing that ye* Eph. vi. 9. *alſo have a Maſter in Heaven, forbearing Threatning.* And agreeable to our honourable Friend *William Penn*'s Advice to his Children, in caſe they ſhould have Servants, on this wiſe,— "Let them know "their Buſineſs as well as their Wages; and as "they do the one, pay them honeſtly the other. "Though Servants, yet remember they are Bre"thren in Chriſt, and that you alſo are but Stew"ards, and muſt Account to God. Wherefore "let your Moderation appear unto them, and that "will provoke them to Diligence for Love rather "than Fear, which is the trueſt and beſt Motive to "Service." *Farewel.* Having made this Digreſſion, I now find Drawings in my Mind to give ſome Counſel and Advice, in Brotherly Love and Charity, to ſuch who may in divers Reſpects be ſaid to dwell in the Houſe of Mourning; and now,

6thly, and *laſtly*, In much Compaſſion, Sympathy, and Brotherly Kindneſs, I am concern'd to viſit you honeſt-hearted, infirm, afflicted, *dear Friends*, with all the Faithful in Diſtreſs on any Account whatſoever, here or elſewhere, all the World over, bond or free, in your ſeveral Situations. Ye *dear Elders*, who by reaſon of Age, find your natural Faculties and Abilities to fail, your

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Sight to wax very dim, and even quite, or almoſt to leave ſome of you; though your may in theſe proving Circumſtances be confin'd to your Rooms or Beds, and being incapable to earn your Bread, may be ſupply'd by, and are under the tender Care of the Church; be not caſt down, the Lord is with you, and as you depend upon him, he will be your Comfort; yea, *my Beloved*, he that was your Morning Light, will become your Evening Song: The Lord will ſtrengthen you upon the Bed of Languiſhing, make all your Bed in your Sickneſs, bear up your Heads above the Waters, and ſanctify your Conditions unto you, and in a while mercifully remove you out of this troubleſome World, into his bliſsful Kingdom, where the Wicked ceaſe from troubling, and where the Weary are at reſt. And you, my *dear poor Friends*, who may not yet be attained to old Age, yet, by the Permiſſion of Providence, labour under ſome or divers Diſtempers, Infirmities, and diſagreeable diſcouraging Circumſtances, whether ſupply'd by the Benevolence of your Friends (with your elder Brethren aforeſaid) or otherwiſe, be of good Comfort, you are alſo under the merciful Notice and Regard of the Phyſician of Value, the moſt compaſſionate Shepherd of the Sheep, and the glorious Biſhop of the Souls of his People; as you have your Reliance upon him, he will ſweeten your Paſſage, grant you Patience, ſtrengthen your Faith, make all your Burthens tolerable to you; and if, *my Beloved*, we be but enabled to bear what is laid upon us with becoming Patience (which will be granted, in caſe we are not wanting on our Part) all will be well. May we remember that our Brother *Lazarus*, in the Parable, was afflicted with Sores, Pains, and Poverty, and the rich Man's Dogs afforded this poor Beggar more Relief than their voluptuous Maſter did; yet being under the tender Notice of Heaven, he was

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soon deliver'd from all this Troubles, and convey'd by Angels into *Abraham*'s Bosom: Humbly and patiently therefore trust in the Lord; do your best to serve him with all your Heart, and in a short Time (I have to tell you) you'll be favour'd with the like happy Change, and be removed hence from this your House of Mourning into the Father's House of Joy, wherein are many blessed Mansions, where, though ye are poor in this World, ye will be Heirs, and Joint-heirs in the endless Kingdom of Glory, Rest and Peace. And in the mean Time, *dear Brethren*, though many of you by reason of bodily Weakness, cannot personally attend religious Assemblies, to worship God with your Brethren, your private Devotion will be acceptable, and you'll feel, according to your Degrees and Growths, a drinking of the Water that Christ shall give you, which will be in you a Well of Water springing and bubbling up into eternal Life; when your afflicted Bodies are confin'd in your solitary Chambers or Apartments, and you may have to say, with a good Friend now gone to Rest, who expressed himself thus, a while before he made his Exit, "Altho' "I cannot get to Meetings, yet I know the Way "to my own Spring."

Furthermore, for the Encouragement of every faithful Friend and sincere Lover of holy Jesus, who is not capable personally to attend religious Meetings, 'tis most certain that both the Father and the Son will graciously meet with every such an one, and mercifully grant unto him (or her) a comfortable and permanent Visit,—*If a Man love me*, saith blessed Jesus, *he will keep my Words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our Abode with him.* John xiv. 23.

And before I take Leave of you, and bid you adieu, I must put you in mind for your Comfort, there is a most glorious Appointment made for you, and

and all greeted in this Epiſtle, as you and they perſevere in well doing; of which Chriſt our dear Lord is to be the Miniſter and Diſpenſer, as it is expreſs'd,—*To appoint to them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them Beauty for Aſhes, the Oil of Joy for Mourning, the Garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs.* As theſe are the heavenly Graces and ſweet Comforts you are in due Time to receive, in exchange for all your Sorrows and Anxieties; all this, I ſay, is the glorious Change of Apparel you are to be arrayed with, ſo I muſt put you all in Mind, who don't only profeſs, but keep (*i. e.* have in Poſſeſſion) the bleſſed Truth, tho' never ſo poor, you are Citizens of a glorious City, into which you are welcom'd by an Inhabitant of the ſaid City, on this wiſe,—*In that Day ſhall this Song be ſung in the Land of Judah; we have a ſtrong City, Salvation will God appoint for Walls and Bulwarks. Open ye the Gates, that the righteous Nation, which keepeth the Truth, may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace, whoſe Mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee. Truſt ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting Strength.*

Iſa. lxi. 3.

Iſa. xxvi. 1, 2, 3, 4.

My *dear Friends*, of all the ſix Claſſes viſited by this Epiſtle, it ariſes in my Heart further to put you in Mind of the comfortable Expreſſions of our dear Lord and Maſter to his deeply tried Diſciples, which I truſt are applicable to your Circumſtances in your reſpective Degrees,—*Are not five Sparrows ſold for two Farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God: But even the very Hairs of your Head are all number'd. Fear not therefore; ye are of more Value than many Sparrows.—Fear not little Flock, for it is your Father's good Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom.—Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall be comforted.*

Luke xii. 6, 7.

Luke xii. 32.

Mat. 5. 4.

Finally,

Finally, having thus far paid you, dear Friends, the Debt of Love I have long ow'd you; and left you this (it may be) my laſt Legacy, after this Manner. I recommend you to God, his Keeping and Preſervation; and as I can do no leſs than ſympathize with and pray for you, I humbly crave your Prayers for me and mine; having met with Comfort in each of your Situations, for which I am thankful. I remain your affectionate Brother in Tribulation and the Patience of the Kingdom, (according to my ſmall Meaſure)

Skipton, the 17th of the Twelfth Month 1752. DAVID HALL.

N. B. Notwithſtanding the foregoing Lines are chiefly and eſpecially intended, and ſent as a conſolatory Salutation, for the Encouragement of all the Upright-hearted poor Friends in their ſeveral Straits and Diſtreſſes, yet I don't in any wiſe forget, but comfortably remember our dear faithful Friends, whom kind Providence hath favour'd with a plentiful Share of temporal Bleſſings, whereby they are in a great Meaſure exempted from divers Difficulties, which generally attend Perſons in low and pinching Circumſtances, praying for their Preſervation, further Growth and Eſtabliſhment in the bleſſed Truth; neither do I at all diſregard or overlook thoſe Profeſſors of the Truth, in what Station of Life ſoever, who are as ſcatter'd and ſtraying Sheep from the true Fold of Reſt, whether their Wanderings be in a looſe and immoral Conduct, or they under the Cloke of a plain outſide and meer ſuperficial Conformity in a moral Converſation among Men, yet are ſettled down in Indolence, with reſpect to the Spirit and vital Part of the true Religion, or are ſuffering the precious Seed of the Kingdom to be choaked in them by the Cares of

of this Life, or by the Deceitfulness of Riches, by the Love of (or Lust after) other Things. My very fervent Prayers are often in my Heart, and in the Hearts of many Brethren, that all the scattered and dispersed poor Wanderers may be happily prevail'd upon, speedily and timely to return unto our glorious Shepherd and his Fold, whilst the Door of Mercy is yet open, the gracious Day of Visitation, and his compassionate Invitation, is yet mercifully afforded and lengthened out unto them, which was the blessed Experience of some whom the Apostle wrote unto on this wise,—*For ye were as Sheep going astray; but are now return'd unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls.*

1 Pet. ii. 25.

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